

Trust (BBONT). It consists of a large complex of woods, mostly pine and beech, with forest rides and areas of chalk downland.

The first thing I encountered, while waiting to see if anyone was going to show up, was a full-grown larva of *Abraxas sylvata* (Scop.) (clouded magpie) descending on a silken thread from wych elms (*Ulmus glabra*) at the car park. In fact, it landed on my head! Searching the wych elms revealed many more larvae of this species in various stages of growth. Also seen on these trees were mines and larvae of *Bucculatrix albedinella* Zell., and mines of *Stigmella marginicolella* (Stt.) and *S. ulnivora* (Fol.).

Along the border of a path through the woods plants of wood avens (*Geum urbanum*) were being mined by *S. aurella* (Fab.)/*gei* (Wocke). The taxonomic status of these moths is still, I believe, uncertain. Another interesting stigmellid, *S. aeneofasciella* (H.-S.) was found mining leaves of agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*) in a small area of chalk downland, along with *Fomoria septembrella* (Stt.) in perforate St John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*). In a damp area of woodland *Ectoedemia arcuatella* (H.-S.) was found in wild strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*). One of the few oaks (*Quercus robur*) in this complex of woods contained *E. albifasciella* (Hein.) along with *S. atricapitella* (Haw.) and *Tischeria ekebladella* (Bjerk.). *Bedellia sommientella* (Zell.) was abundant in field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) growing along most of the borders of many woodland rides, early instar larvae of *Stephensia brunnichella* (L.) were abundant in wild basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*) while vacated feeding sites of *Parornix fagivora* (Frey) were found on several of the large beeches (*Fagus sylvatica*). Several species of phyllonoryctids were seen, the best was probably *Phyllonorycter lantanella* (Sch.). Larvae were found in leaves of the wayfaring-tree (*Viburnum lantana*), but only in plants that had been cut back to ground level during management of the chalk downland and had subsequently regrown a little. Cases of *Coleophora artemisicolella* Bru. were frequent on seeds of mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*). This species is not mapped for VC 24 in MBGBI. 3.

A total of 7 species of Macrolepidoptera and 76 micros were recorded in various stages, not bad for a relatively poor leafminer year. A full species list has been sent to our archivists and supplied to BBONT, to whom I extend my thanks for permission to hold this meeting.

Wye Valley Woodlands, Gloucestershire, 8 May 1999

Leader: Roger Gaunt.—This meeting was planned to do some recording in an area of semi-natural broad-leaved woodland that has scarce hook-tip *Sabra harpagnla* (Esp.) and *Salebriopsis albicilla* (H.-S.) later in the season, but in which there has been no previous recording at this time of the year.

Unfortunately weather conditions were such that only a limited amount of recording took place. Gavin Boyd travelled all the way from Northampton for the morning meeting to be the only visiting member. Before heavy rain curtailed activities, Gavin recorded just one bee, *Nomada flava* (Panzer), and in addition a handful of moths of no special interest were knocked up.

In view of the conditions it did not seem likely that anyone would turn up in the evening; however Norman Binsted set out from Romsey in dry weather and having travelled all that way was undeterred by the rain, now light, that continued to fall. His MV light, stationed at Shorn Cliff, attracted 28 species of moth. By far the most common was orange footman *Eilema sorocula* (Hufn.) (Notable Nb.). Also recorded was a speciality of these woods, pauper pug *Enphithecia egenaria* (H.-S.) (RDB3).

and little thorn *Cepphis advenaria* (Hüb.), which has started coming to light in recent years.

A new record for VC34 was made when an unfamiliar tortrix taken as a voucher specimen turned out to be *Metendothenia* (formerly *Hedya*) *atropunctana* (Zett.). Bradley *et al.* do not list this moth for Gloucestershire but there appears to have been a record from Stroud (VC33) in 1917 (Metcalf, 1917. *The Entomologist*, **50**, 274).

A full species list was prepared and has been forwarded to Forest Enterprise, who gave permission for the meeting to be held, and to BENHS for their archives.

Loch Con (NN6967; alt. 1500 ft), Perthshire, 29–30 May 1999

Leader: **Keith Bland**.— On 29 May even by Scottish standards, the weather was somewhat inclement. Persistent light to heavy rain throughout the day until 15.00 hr proved sufficient to deter all but the leader. In the afternoon the showers became lighter and more intermittent and gave way to a fine overcast evening spoilt only by a stiff breeze. In addition, the high water level in the loch prevented access to the islands where some of the most interesting vegetation occurs. Then, to cap everything, as darkness fell and the MV-lamp was lit, the sky cleared and out popped the most magnificently clear full-moon. Very quickly the temperature plummeted and everywhere became white with a heavy frost.

Of the early species only *Argyrotaenia lungiana* (Thun.) (= *pulchellana* Haw.) was encountered, although a cocoon with exuvium of *Phragmatobia fuliginosa* (L.) indicated that this species was also on the wing. Several *Ematurga atomaria* (L.) and *Neofaculta ericetella* (Geyer) had already emerged. A single pupa of the latter was also found which emerged a few days later. An exposed bank supporting *Genista anglica* and *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* amongst its vegetation yielded *Ancylis myrtillana* (Treitschke) and several well-marked *Ancylis unguicella* (L.). Unfortunately no larvae could be found on the *Genista* or the *Arctostaphylos*. However, the cowberry sported many mines of *Ectoedemia weaveri* (Staint.) and many blistermines of *Phyllonorycter junoniella* (Zell.). The bilberry patches were well stocked with larvae but predominantly those of the geometrids *Hydriomena furcata* (Thun.) and *Operophtera brumata* (L.) with only a few young larvae of a tortricid, probably *Rhopobota naevana* (Hüb.). The large quantity of old cocoons that had weathered out of the peat suggested that last year had been a bumper year for the northern eggjar, *Lasiocampa quercus callunae* Palmer, in this area. A lunch-time retreat into the fisherman's bothy revealed only the corpses of a few *Hofmannophila pseudospretella* (Stainton). Considering the weather and the altitude this list of a mere twelve species of Lepidoptera is not unrespectable. The MV-light failed to raise even a kamikaze gnat!

The Diptera were even less in evidence than the Lepidoptera. Besides the occasional specimens of the ubiquitous *Scathophaga stercoraria* (L.), the impressive larvae of *Pedicia rivosa* (L.) were present in the wet flushes and the larvae of *Scaptomyza graminum* were found mining the leaves of *Stellaria uliginosa*.

The highlight of the day was however on the ornithological front when a first year male red-breasted merganser (*Mergus serrator*) spent some twenty minutes casually feeding within 10 yards of the parked car. Several common gulls (*Larus canus*) were on eggs around the loch and several common scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) were busy feeding further out on the open water.